

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method of preparing a potato based food product, the method comprising:

processing potatoes into potato articles in the form of french fries having a desired size and shape;

blanching the potato articles;

dipping the blanched potato articles in a solution to prevent non-enzymic oxidation of the potato articles;

drying the dipped potato articles;

coating the potato articles in an emulsion containing starch, oil, salt and colouring to form coated articles;

introducing the coated articles into a hot air environment;
and

removing the coated articles from the hot air environment.

2. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of blanching the potato articles comprises immersing the potato articles in a heated water bath at a temperature between 70 °C and 95 °C for between 5 minutes and 20 minutes.

3. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the step of dipping the blanched potato articles in a solution comprises immersing the potato articles in a sodium acid pyrophosphate solution.

4. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 3, wherein the sodium acid pyrophosphate solution comprises 1% sodium acid pyrophosphate.

5. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 3, wherein the sodium acid pyrophosphate solution is provided at a temperature of 65 °C and the potato articles are immersed for a time period of about 60 seconds.

6. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of drying the potato articles comprises introducing the potato articles into an elevated temperature environment.

7. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of drying the dipped potato articles is carried out at ambient temperature.

8. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the emulsion comprises a mixture including water, oil, starch, colouring, emulsifier, stabilizer and salt.

9. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein the emulsion comprises:

Water	53.00% - 60.00%
Sunflower Oil	24.00% - 28.00%
Maize Starch	10.00% - 12.00%
Turmeric	0.01% - 0.10%
Liquid Paprika	0.01% - 0.10%
Emulsifier	0.80% - 1.00%

Gum stabiliser	0.10% - 0.30%
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Salt	4.00% - 6.00%
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10. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the emulsion comprises a mixture including water, oil, starch, flour, dextrin, gum, sodium bicarbonate, salt, colouring, oil, sodium acid pyrophosphate and dextrose.

11. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 10, wherein the emulsion comprises:

Water	48.00% - 54.00%
Sunflower oil	13.00% - 16.00%
Modified Potato Starch	9.00% - 11.00%
Rice Flour	5.00% - 7.00%
Potato Dextrin	9.00% - 11.00%
Maize Starch	4.00% - 6.00%
Xanthan Gum	0.01% - 0.10%
Sodium Bicarbonate	0.30% - 0.40%
Sodium Acid Pyrophosphate	0.40% - 0.50%
Salt	1.00% - 2.00%
Turmeric Extract Powder	0.01% - 0.10%
Paprika Oleoresin	0.01% - 0.10%
Vegetable Oil	0.01% - 0.10%
Dextrose	0.30% - 0.40%
Guar Gum	0.01% - 0.10%

12. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising drying the coated articles prior to introducing the coated articles into the hot air environment.

13. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 12, wherein the step of drying the coated articles comprises introducing the coated articles into a warm air environment.

14. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein the coated articles are dried at a temperature between 100 °C and 130 °C.

15. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 14, wherein the coated articles are dried at a temperature between 105 °C and 120 °C.

16. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the introducing step comprises introducing the coated articles into an impingement oven.

17. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the hot air environment has a temperature between 240 °C and 285 °C.

18. (cancelled)

19. (cancelled)

20. (cancelled)

21. (cancelled)

22. (cancelled)

23. (new) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the potatoes are processed to have a dimension in cross-section of between 8 mm and 15 mm.